

What is claimed is:

1. A method of using short range wireless signals to detect context comprising the steps of:

detecting by at least a short-range wireless signal subscriber unit or a device, said short range wireless signals from at least one transmitter of said short range wireless signals;

recovering, from detected short range wireless signals from said at least one transmitter, information that conveys at least the presence of a device or a subscriber unit coupled to at least one transmitter of said short range wireless signals that is substantially within a short range from said subscriber unit or said device.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein said step of recovering information further includes recovering at least one of:

the functionality of said device;

the identity of said device;

the operation of said device.

3. The method of claim 2 wherein said step of recovering operation includes recovering at least one of:

status;

and activity.

4 A method of using short range wireless signals to detect context, comprising the steps of:

detecting said short range wireless signals from at least one transmitter of said short range wireless signals;

recovering, from detected short range wireless signals from said at least one transmitter, information that conveys at least the presence of at least one of a device or a subscriber unit coupled to at least one transmitter of said short range wireless signals, and which is within a short range of said wireless signal subscriber unit or device;

forwarding said information to at least one service provider.

5. The method of claim 4 wherein said step of recovering information further includes recovering at least one of:

- the functionality of said device;
- the identity of said device;
- the operation of said device;
- prior to the step of forwarding said information to at least one service provider.

6. The method of claim 5 wherein said step of recovering operation includes recovering at least one of:

- status;
- and activity;
- prior to the step of forwarding said information to at least one service provider.

7. A method of using short range wireless signals to detect context comprising the steps of:

detecting said short range wireless signals from at least one transmitter of said short range wireless signals by at least one of a short range wireless signal subscriber unit or a short range wireless signal device;

recovering, from detected short range wireless signals from said at least one transmitter, information that conveys at least the presence of at least one of a device or subscriber unit coupled to at least one transmitter of said short range wireless signals and which is within a short range of said subscriber unit or device;

deriving contextual information from said recovered information.

8. The method of claim 7 wherein said step of recovering information further includes recovering at least one of:

- the functionality of said device or said subscriber unit;
- the identity of said device or said subscriber unit;
- the operation of said device or said subscriber unit;

prior to the step of deriving contextual information from said recovered information.

9. The method of claim 8 wherein said step of recovering operation includes recovering at least one of:

status;

and activity;

prior to the step of deriving contextual information from said recovered information.

10 A method of using short range wireless signals to detect proximity-determined context, comprising the steps of:

detecting, short range wireless signals from a transmitter, said transmitter being associated with at least one context-determining device;

recovering, from detected short range wireless signals, information that conveys at least the presence of said context-determining device or a subscriber unit coupled to said transmitter that is within a short range of said short range wireless signal subscriber unit or device;

deriving contextual information from said recovered information;

forwarding said derived contextual information to at least one service provider.

11. The method of claim 10 wherein said step of recovering information further includes recovering at least one of:

the functionality of said device or said subscriber unit;

the identity of said device or said subscriber unit;

the operation of said device or said subscriber unit;

prior to the step of deriving contextual information.

12. The method of claim 11 wherein said step of recovering operation includes recovering at least one of:

status;

and activity;  
prior to the step of deriving contextual information.

13. A method of using short range wireless signals to determine geographic context proximate to at least one of a short range wireless signal subscriber unit or a device, comprising the steps of:

obtaining status information from at least one context-determinative device or subscriber unit;

broadcasting said status information throughout a geographic area using said short range wireless signals and a predetermined wireless communications protocol.

14. The method of claim 13 wherein said step of obtaining status information includes reading information from said context determinative device or subscriber unit that includes information for at least one of:

the functionality of said device or subscriber unit;

the identity of said device or subscriber unit;

the operation of said device or subscriber unit.

15. The method of claim 14 wherein said step of obtaining operation information includes reading information for at least one of:

status;

and activity.

16. A subscriber unit for obtaining context-determinative information from a context-determinative device, said subscriber unit comprised of:

short range wireless signal transceiver means for:

at least detecting short range wireless signals from at least one transmitter of said short range wireless signals; and

a processor means, operatively coupled to said short range wireless signal transceiver means for:

recovering, from detected short range wireless signals from said at least one transmitter, information that conveys at least the presence of a device coupled to said at least one transmitter of said short range wireless signals that is within a short range of said short range wireless signal subscriber unit.

17. A system for obtaining context-determinative information from context-determinative devices, said system comprised of:

a plurality of short range wireless signal transmitters, each of which is coupled to at least one context determinative device, said plurality of short range wireless signal transmitters broadcasting information about said devices via short range wireless signals;

at least one short range wireless receiver means for:

detecting, short range wireless signals from at least one transmitter of said short range wireless signals and deriving, from said short range wireless signals, information about the surroundings of said short-range wireless receiver means.

18. A method of using short range wireless signals to determine geographic context comprising the steps of:

receiving information obtained throughout a geographic area by receiving short range wireless signals broadcast from at least one subscriber unit that broadcast said signals using a predetermined wireless communications protocol;

processing said information from said at least one subscriber unit to determine said subscriber unit's context.

19. A method of using short range wireless signals to determine geographic context comprising the steps of:

receiving information obtained throughout a geographic area by receiving short range wireless signals broadcast from at least one subscriber unit that broadcast said signals using a predetermined wireless communications protocol;

processing said information from said at least one subscriber unit to determine said subscriber unit's context;

sending context-relevant information to said subscriber unit using said predetermined wireless communications protocol.

20. A method of using short range wireless signals to determine geographic context comprising the steps of:

receiving information obtained throughout a geographic area by receiving short range wireless signals broadcast from at least one subscriber unit that broadcast said signals using a predetermined wireless communications protocol;

processing said information from said at least one subscriber unit to determine said subscriber unit's context;

providing a context-relevant services to said subscriber unit user in response to said information obtained from said subscriber unit using said predetermined wireless communications protocol.